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B O S T O N :
J O H N H . E A S T B U R N , P R I N T E R .

1841.



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ANNUAL REPORT.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION.

GENTLEMEN :

THE following Report for the year 1840, is respectfully submitted.

Seven pupils have been discharged ; one has deceased ; and ten have been admitted.

The present number of blind persons connected with the Institution is sixty-seven. Of these, thirty-seven are beneficiaries of the State of Massachusetts ; fifteen are beneficiaries received on warrants from other States ; three pay their own expenses ; seven pay a part of their expenses ; and five pay nothing.

They have been generally healthy ; and the single death which we have to report, is the only one which has occurred during three years. The deceased was Adeline Munroe of Cambridge, an interesting girl, twelve years of age. She was of a feeble constitution, and predisposed to phthisis, of which she died.

But although we have to lament this dispensation, there is abundant reason for gratitude to that over

ruling Providence, which has smiled beneficently upon our charge, and blessed with success during another year, the efforts for its welfare

It may be regarded as peculiarly fortunate, that but one death has occurred among the pupils during three years, and that they have usually been in excellent health, because in a community of blind persons, one would naturally look for more illness and greater mortality than among an equal number of seeing persons similarly circumstanced, and for various reasons.

First, because in many cases, blindness is only a symptom, or a local effect of some general cause which affects the whole physical organization.

Second, because in childhood they do not have the powers of the system properly developed.

Lastly, but most especially, because their infirmity is a hindrance to that free and almost ceaseless exercise of the muscular system, which seems necessary in youth for the full development of the bodily powers, and which fits it for firm endurance through long life.

We have endeavoured to counteract the effects of the second, and to obviate the third evil, in the youth committed to our care ; but we have often to contend with an almost insuperable repugnance to locomotion. With children indeed, there is no such difficulty ; nature provides such an exuberance of animal spirits, that motion, not rest, seems their natural condition ; and a dozen blind children put into a clear room or play-ground will so make it ring with their merry shouts, and so heartily play their simple games, as to show that bare existence is a boon, and that sunlight and eye-sight are but additional blessings.

For this reason it is desirable that blind children should be sent early to an Institution ; because it is only in company with others similarly situated, that they will be sure to have free scope for their inclination to exercise their limbs. An isolated blind child is unable to join in the sports and excursions of his brothers and their playmates, and he is left alone in the house ; the mother checks what inclination he manifests to move about, because it seems dangerous to let him go alone ; she tries to furnish him amusement which requires no locomotion, and teaches him to seek in the rocking chair the only kind of movement which she deems safe. In this way the great majority of blind children grow up without that exercise in the open air which is so neccessary for healthy development of the system.

Most of our pupils are over fourteen years old when they enter, and they have generally the quiet and staid demeanor, and the sedentary habits of adults. If allowed to continue in these, they can never have robust health, or enduring constitutions ; for nature requires during the period of growth that there should also be considerable waste to the system ; and she will never be balked of her requirements without making the offenders pay the penalty, and with high interest too.

Hence it is necessary to be very rigid in requiring the pupils to go to walk daily ; to go through with gymnastic exercises in winter ; and to resort freely to sea-bathing in the summer.

But, with all this, it is hardly possible to remedy the evils of early habits ; and hence it is so very rare to see even an educated blind person with an erect frame, a well developed chest, and that clear glowing

countenance which is not only an essential ingredient of beauty, but a sure indication of health.

But the ill effects of early inaction cease not here ; few persons born blind attain to old age ; and the great majority when they become adults are feeble, nervous, and peculiarly liable to epileptic and similar affections.

Nor is this the worst feature of the case ; body and mind react upon each other ; the little games of childhood are preparatory to the greater games of manhood ; the ball, the kite, and the hoop, call for thought, invention, and energy ; and every game excites emulation and perseverance, all simple and childish indeed, but no more so than were the early mental efforts of a Cæsar or a Newton. The blind have seldom this early training ; they do not meet and overcome opposition and difficulty by effort and energy, but they have their wants supplied to their hand ; the mother runs and fetches whatever the child requires, and pets and humors it continually. The consequence is that he is unfitted for the rough arena of the world ; and in after life is apt to be uneasy under any discipline, daunted by any obstacle, and fretted by the least opposition.

This is not always, but it is too often the case ; the tendency of such treatment is to make the subject of it as deficient in mental energy, as he is in external senses ; and there is no more certain corrective of the evil than placing the child in a community of persons resembling him in all respects, where he is not discouraged by a sense of marked inferiority, and where he can put forth his energies with a reasonable hope of success as great as that of his fellows.

Thus, it is seen, that blindness is more than the mere privation of one sense ; it affects the whole physical and moral man ; because,

“ From nature’s chain whatever link you strike,”

“ Tenth, or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.”

To train the intellect merely ; to impart knowledge to the blind, is comparatively an easy task ; for so doth the soul thirst for knowledge, that it will attain it even when half its avenues are blocked up ; and a sponge placed in water will not more certainly imbibe it than will the mind of man take in knowledge of the condition and relations of things with which his body is surrounded. If the eye be obstructed, the ear opens wider its portals, and hears your very emotions in the varying tones of your voice ; if the ear be stopped, the quickened eye will almost read the words as they fall from your lips ; and if both be close sealed up, the whole body becomes like a sensitive plant—the quickened skin perceives the very vibrations of the air, and you may even write your thoughts upon it, and receive answers from the sentient soul within.

But there is much else to do besides conveying intellectual light to the benighted blind ; there is much that can only be done by the mother, and in the nursery ; and it is with a view of drawing their attention to this subject, that we have made these remarks.

We would not only receive children as early as they can well leave a mother’s care, but we would have them trained by her to do for themselves every thing which it is possible for them to do ; that is, every thing which seeing persons can do for themselves without light.

We would, if possible, extend the advantage of our system of training beyond the walls of the Institution, and make our experience useful to as many blind children as possible ; and we would say to their parents and friends—never check the motions of the child ; follow him, and watch him to prevent any serious accident, but do not interfere unnecessarily ; do not even remove obstacles which he would learn to avoid by tumbling over them a few times. Teach him to jump rope, to swing weights, to raise his body by his arms, and to mingle, as far as possible, in the rough sports of your other boys ; do not be over apprehensive of his safety, and if you should see him clambering in the branches of a tree, be sure he is less likely to fall than if he had eyes. Do not too much regard bumps upon the forehead, rough scratches, or bloody noses ; even these may have their good influences ; at the worst, they affect only the bark, and do not injure the system like the rust of inaction.

Let a boy saw wood, take care of cattle, do jobs about the house ; and if you can afford it, let him have a leader to go off upon long excursions ; let him learn to ride, to swim, to row, to skate, &c.

Bring up a girl to be active about the house ; to do every possible kind of work which requires motion of the body ; and do not confine her too much to knitting, sewing, &c. As for intellectual knowledge, only set it before any children in the proper shape, and they will take it as surely as they will their food. Do not forbid blind children to feel of any thing within their reach, or even to clamber up to reach more ; remember that telling a blind child not to feel of things, is like telling seeing children

not to open their eyes and look at them. Put out of their way what they may injure, or gratify their curiosity by letting them pass their fingers over it once, and then explain why you wish them to abstain afterwards. But especially, let them have every opportunity of trying to acquire knowledge of *things*; they will pick it up even in situations where you would hardly expect it. We have known blind boys go into a Menagerie, and acquire a more correct idea of the size, shape, and habits of animals than most seeing boys would. They are not content with hearing that a camel is five feet high, and has a hump on his back; or that an elephant has rough hide, and scattered hairs; but desire to mount on the one, and to feel of the other, and they should be gratified, if possible.

You can while he is yet very young teach your child the power of letters, the division of syllables, as well as how to spell; you can teach him grammar, mental arithmetic, &c.; and you can give him much useful knowledge, by a select course of reading.

Nothing perhaps will compensate fully for the advantages which the child would derive from being in a little community of blind persons; but if you cannot send him to a school for the blind, you can teach him to read raised letters; the elementary lessons for which can be had gratuitously by application at our Institution.

But especially should his musical talents be early developed and well cultivated; for even should his lot in life be ever so poor and lowly, music will not only lighten and gladden many a dark hour, but it will purify and elevate his mind.

The study of music as a science must ever be con-

sidered of great importance in the education of the blind. Here they labor under no disadvantage ; for although the contrivance of embossed notes can never equal in value that of printed ones ; yet the blind person has an advantage over the seeing one in the greater quickness and delicacy of his ear, and in his nicer faculty of measuring time.

The musical profession is one which a blind person may follow with ease and profit to himself, and with benefit to the community. As tuners of pianos, as organists, as teachers of music, they may succeed well ; of this we have had proof in the case of former pupils of our Institution, several of whom, we are happy to say, are now earning an honorable livelihood in those ways. We do not however confine musical instruction to those who have so much natural talent for it, as to fit them to become teachers ; but we cultivate a taste for it in all the pupils ; and they almost without an exception are found capable of bearing a part in the choir, or performing in the orchestra.

The moral effects of music are sometimes powerful, and always good ; for, although those who have a nice organization, and who have passed whole years

“ Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony,”

can alone draw from it its almost intellectual delights ; and though, (in the language of an elegant writer,) “ relatively to minds that are capable of enjoyments “ more truly intellectual, it is to be considered as a “ mere pastime or relaxation, it assumes a far higher “ character in its relations to the general pleasures of “ common minds, and may be said, at least, to be the

“intellectual luxury of those who are incapable of
 “any other luxury that deserves so honorable a
 “name. And it is well that there should be some
 “intermediate pleasure of this sort, to withdraw for
 “a while the dull and sensual from the grosser exist-
 “ence in which they may be sunk, and to give them
 “some glimpses at least, of a state of purer enjoy-
 “ment, than that which is to be derived from the
 “sordid gains and sordid luxuries of common life.”

Wise and humane considerations like these call for the culture of musical taste in all children, but with tenfold force in the case of the blind—that it may beguile their solitary hours—that it may strengthen their social relations, by enabling them to contribute to social enjoyments—and that it may adorn and elevate their devotion, when engaged in the private or public rites of religion.

Accordingly they have always had due weight in the administration of our Institution ; and great expense has been incurred, to provide all the necessary instruments ; and great pains have been taken to secure the services of able and scientific teachers.

During the past year, the progress of the pupils has not been equal, perhaps, to that of former years, owing to the illness of our esteemed professor, Mr. Keller. It has been such, however, as, all things considered, does credit to the pupils, and to him.

In the department of more purely intellectual education, the same course has been pursued, as in former years, and which has been detailed in former reports.

Most of the pupils spend four hours daily, in the school, where are taught arithmetic and algebra, geography, grammar, history, and natural and moral

philosophy. The instruction is, of course, mostly oral, and the classes are small. The teacher is required to secure the attention of every pupil, which is very easy when things, not words, are taught, and where the child called upon to exercise his own faculties, and analyze every thing he hears, is converted from a passive recipient into an active inquirer for knowledge. The pupils have not the questionable advantage of learning lessons by rote from books ; but neither do they have its positive disadvantages. Truth and knowledge, when presented in the proper form, are so attractive to them, that it has not to be whipped in, nor coaxed or bribed in ; and, if our school has none of the boasted good effects of emulation and fear, it has at least none of their ill effects.

The time devoted to school is short ; for there is a recess of fifteen minutes at the end of each hour ; but, as a general thing, every pupil is intently engaged every minute of the time ; and, as an hour of music comes between each hour of school, their minds are fresh and they can work with great vigor.

We need not dwell upon the particular mode of instruction, or explain the apparatus by means of which whatever of visible illustration is given in common schools in ours is made tangible ; this has been done often.

In illustration, however, of what has been asserted in former reports, that instruction in all branches could be given in this way, it may be mentioned that one of our pupils, Joseph B. Smith, blind from his cradle, was presented last commencement for admission at Cambridge University, passed a satisfactory examination, and has thus far maintained a respectable rank in his class. He has no favor shown him,

and has been excused from no studies on account of his blindness, but is able to grapple with and master all of them.* He is likewise organist at the chapel. His age is seventeen ; and, as without any extraordinary natural ability, he has been enabled to acquire the attainments necessary for entering College, and an acquaintance with many collateral subjects besides, his case may serve as an encouragement to any young blind persons who may desire to cultivate their intellect.

It is proper to mention in this connection the case of Laura Bridgman, the deaf, dumb, and blind child, who has excited great interest in all who have seen her ; and who has become greatly endeared to all those who have intimate acquaintance with her. She has continued to grow in intellect, as well as in stature ; and has improved in personal appearance, for her countenance is more expressive of her feelings, and her motions are more graceful and easy.

It was stated in the last year's report that she could sew, knit, braid, and be very handy about house work ; also that she had acquired a knowledge

* He gets his lessons by help of his chum, who reads them over to him carefully, and seeks out in the lexicon the meaning of those words which he does not understand. Smith carries his grammar in his head, and applies the rules in analyzing the sentences ; and when once he has learned their meaning and structure, he does not easily forget it. So in mathematics ; his chum reads the demonstrations aloud, and fixes his eyes upon the figure in order to understand it ; but Smith has his figure before his mind's eye, and by strong effort fixes it there until the demonstration is perfectly clear.

It will be perceived at once, who is obliged to make the greatest intellectual effort : and the effect, too, of such effort continued through all the studies of youth, will be understood by all who reflect that a mental faculty is as much strengthened by exercise, as is the arm of a blacksmith by labor.

When the demonstration is very long, and the figure so complicated that even the vice-like gripe of a blind man's attention cannot hold it up steadily before his mind, it is very easy to have it embossed upon thick paper, and then it may be examined by the fingers.

of the manual alphabet of the deaf mutes, and even the power of writing a legible hand, and of committing her simple thoughts to paper in simpler language. In regard to all these she has improved very much during the year, especially in the use of language. For a detailed account of the mode of instruction, and of the phenomena which have been exhibited in her case, we refer you to a report submitted by the Director, and which will be found in Appendix A.

It was mentioned in the last year's report, that great want was felt of an additional department to our Institution for the purpose of providing employment to those pupils who have acquired their education and learned to work, but who could not find employment, or carry on business alone. Many a blind person has acquired a knowledge of some handicraft, but he cannot work at it, as seeing workmen do, or be employed in a common workshop ; he has no capital, perhaps, and cannot buy materials, or wait uncertain time for the sales, and he is idle. It is for the sake of such persons we are happy to say, that a separate work department has been opened during the past year ; and a beginning has been made of an establishment which, if successful will become of great value to the blind.

Five young men, and four young women have been steadily employed during a great part the year, besides some who have worked occasionally.

The principle is to allow them as much as they can earn over and above the cost of their board : part of them however work by the week ; the highest amount of wages being \$12 per month and board. The amount paid out in cash to blind persons for work during the year is about \$600.

It is not intended to be a source of gain to the Institution ; on the contrary it must be a pecuniary loss at the outset ; it is wholly for the benefit of the individuals who work in it ; and as long as the liberal appropriation from the State shall be continued, it will not be necessary to deduct from the profits of the work, any thing to pay for the general expenses of supervision.

In this department the blind feel perfectly independent, being assured that they earn the bread they eat ; and if any surplus remains to them, it is far more prized than would be ten times the amount of alms.

The members in this department, being principally adults, have no connection with the school ; they have a separate table, and separate apartments ; and are no farther subject to the rules of the establishment than is necessary for good order. When their work is done they pass their evening as they choose ; and generally do choose to listen to reading of the newspapers, or instructive books.

This department is now open to any adult blind persons (not over fifty years of age,) of good moral character ; and the regulations are as follows ; beneficiaries from Massachusetts are admitted gratuitously ; beneficiaries from Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, or Connecticut by warrants from their respective States, or security from their friends for the payment of \$100 the first year ; and fifty dollars the second year.

After the first year an account current will be opened with each pupil ; he will be charged with the actual cost of his board, which will not be over two dollars per week ; and he will be credited with the

amount paid for him by the State, or by his friends ; also with his earnings over and above the cost of the stock which he uses, so that all his earnings over one dollar per week, will be his own. By the third year it will be known whether his earnings will more than pay the actual cost of his board ; if they should, he will have it at his option to remain and receive his earnings or not. Those who prove unable to earn their own livelihood will not be retained ; as it is not desirable to convert the establishment into an almshouse, or to retain any but working bees in the hive. Those who by physical or mental imbecility are disqualified for work, are thereby disqualified from being members of an industrious community ; and they can be better provided for in establishments fitted for the infirm.

All former pupils of this, or of kindred Institutions, who have been regularly discharged, may be admitted to the work department upon the same conditions as those who are upon their second year.

It shall be our endeavor to render this department pleasant and profitable to those who choose to enter it.

Much of its success however, will depend on the disposition of the public to patronize it. The articles manufactured will be warranted to be of the best materials and faithfully made up ; and pains will be taken by the use of good stock, and by fidelity of work, to compensate for the apparent disadvantage of inferiority in elegance and neatness of execution.

A blind man cannot finish a broom, or a brush for instance, with that neatness and polish which a seeing workman can ; but he can make as strong and serviceable an article, and he is willing to work for a smaller profit.

At the depository in the city (No. 152 Washington Street,) will be found for sale, mattresses of hair and palm leaf; cushions, entry mats, shoe brushes, cloth-brushes, brooms, and various articles of fancy work. They are offered at fair prices; and the purchaser will not be expected to pay a cent more than the articles are really worth.

As yet, however, the establishment needs patronage: for although the sales have been steadily increasing, they are not sufficient to give employment to all blind persons who need it.

For the amount of work performed during the year, the account of sales, &c., we refer you to Appendix B.

We regret to have to state, that little has been done during the last year, in the printing department.

One work only of any magnitude has been printed and that one principally by the liberality of a single individual. This is to be the more regretted as the impetus which the first successful operation of our press seemed to give to the cause of printing for the Blind in this country, and in Scotland, is not resulting, in all cases, in the publication of such books as will be useful to the blind generally.

The press of the Glasgow Institution, and that of Philadelphia, are now in successful operation.

The books from the Glasgow press are very much inferior to those of Philadelphia, in sharpness and durability of the impression. The selection also of books is such that they are of but little use in this country; for, aside from the Bible (the greater part of which was printed at our press four years ago) they are principally of a sectarian religious character. The Philadelphia press has added some valu-

able matter to the literature of the blind ; but its operations are not rapid enough for the eager demand.*

We have to acknowledge the friendly courtesy of that Institution, with whom we not only interchange books, but have an understanding which will prevent us from printing the same work at both presses.

We are sorry to say that the same understanding cannot be had with the Glasgow School, and that an offer, on our part, of mutual exchange, has been rejected. We are not unaware of some advantages which would result from a uniformity of characters ; but we cannot, however, acquiesce in the opinion of those who seem to fear that the sense of touch of blind children may be exhausted by reading books with a little diversity of letters. Reason and experience show us that individuals have not a given quantity of sensation, which must be economised : but on the contrary, that the amount of it depends upon the exercise of the organs of sense. As little should we fear that hearing Italian music would unfit the ear for listening to, or appreciating any other, as that reading a book, even in German text, would injure the feeling of the blind. We believe, rather, that it will be increased.

Neither have we any fear that by becoming familiar with another kind of printing, our pupils may give it the preference ; for such a result, establishing the inferiority of our method, would make us change it, and adopt a better. We shall therefore procure by purchase, the books of the Glasgow press, and put them into the hands of our pupils : and as an inducement to individuals, and to other

*For a list of books printed at the different Institutions, see Appendix C.

Institutions, to continue to print books in raised letters, and for the benefit of our children, we shall order copies of all new works wherever printed.

We trust, however, that our press will not be suffered to rest, but that it will continue to send out standard and useful books.

What seems to be most required, are not books which one would read once or twice only, but works of reference, works of science; those books, in short, which are carefully studied and frequently recurred to: such are some of the works printed at our press; as the New, and parts of the Old Testament, a compendious geography, a grammar, an universal history, a geometry, a political class book, &c.

So certain and so abundant are the returns to him who gives in the true spirit of charity, that it is difficult to say which of its forms is preferable; but surely he who has the means of printing a book for the blind, can wish for no higher gratification than the consciousness that it will beguile the lonely hours of some whose companions have left them for scenes of enjoyment from which their infirmity cuts them off; and that, long after the giver is in his grave, the gift will continue to enliven and gladden many who walk in darkness and in sadness.

We would take this opportunity of acknowledging the courtesy of the Directors of the New York Institution for the Blind, who have sent us a valuable set of the articles manufactured in their workshop.

They consist of baskets, rugs, &c.; and are very beautiful, as well as strong and durable.

They indicate a degree of skill on the part of their pupils, which does their teachers great honor; for they are quite equal to those of the best European

schools, where the attention of the inmates is given solely to handicraft work.

We rejoice also to hear of the success of the more recent establishments in Ohio and Virginia: may they grow and prosper; and may more be erected, until light and knowledge shall be within the reach of every blind person in our land!

For the account of expenses, and of the present state of the finances, we refer you to the appended Report of the Treasurer; whose courtesy and fidelity we take this occasion to acknowledge. The expenses have heretofore been greater than they will need be in future.

The growth of the school has required, at different periods, changes in locality and extension of accommodations, which involved great expense; these, with the purchase of costly apparatus, have nearly exhausted the funds which were raised by contribution many years ago. But a salubrious and convenient building is now secured, which is spacious enough to accommodate the greatest number of blind which the population will furnish for a century, at least; and as it is provided with every thing necessary for effecting the purpose of its creation, we have no fear of its failure through want of funds to continue it.

It is, and must be, dependent upon the liberality of the State, and of charitable individuals; but with a Legislature as enlightened as that of Massachusetts, and in a community as liberal as that which it represents, an Institution for the EDUCATION and RELIEF of the BLIND can need no other guaranty of support, than to require and to merit it.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

At the Annual Meeting of the Corporation, held January 11th, 1841, the President, PETER C. BROOKS, took the Chair.

The Report of the Trustees was read and accepted: and it was

Voted, That two thousand copies of the Report, and the accompanying Documents, be printed.

SAMUEL G. HOWE,

Sec'y of the Corporation.

☞ Piano Fortes will be tuned at short notice and in the best manner, by the Pupils, if orders are left at the Office, No. 152 Washington Street.

APPENDIX A.

TO THE TRUSTEES:

GENTLEMEN,

LAURA BRIDGMAN has become extensively known. Human sympathies are always ready to be poured out in proportion to the amount of human suffering. The privation of any one sense is supposed to be a dreadful calamity, and calls at once for our sympathy with the sufferer; but when a human being is known to be deaf, dumb, blind, without smell, and with imperfect taste, that being excites the tender compassion of all who feel, and becomes an object of great curiosity to those who reflect, as well as feel. When the supposed sufferer is a child—a girl—and of pleasing appearance, the sympathy and the interest are naturally increased.

Such is the case with our beloved pupil, Laura Bridgman; and so general is the interest which she has excited, and so numerous are the inquiries concerning her, that I have thought it would be showing proper respect to the public of this section of the country, to publish, in the next annual report, a short history of her case. It is true, an account of the manner of teaching her, and of her progress from year to year, has been given in the reports of 1838, '39, and '40. But those reports are seldom preserved; and hundreds of people have seen her for the first time during the last year. I therefore submit the following imperfect outline of her history.

She was born in Hanover, New Hampshire, on the twenty-first of December, 1829. She is described as having been a very sprightly and pretty infant, with bright blue eyes. She was, however, so puny and feeble, until she was a year and a half old, that her parents hardly hoped to rear her. She was subject to severe fits, which seemed to rack her frame almost beyond its power of endurance, and life was held by the feeblest tenure; but when a year and a half old, she seemed to rally; the dangerous symptoms subsided; and at twenty months old, she was perfectly well.

Then her mental powers, hitherto stunted in their growth, rapidly developed themselves; and during the four months of health which she enjoyed, she appears (making due allowance for a fond mother's account) to have displayed a considerable degree of intelligence.

But suddenly she sickened again; her disease raged with great violence during five weeks, when her eyes and ears were inflamed, suppurated, and their contents were discharged. But though sight and hearing were gone forever, the poor child's sufferings were not ended. The fever raged during seven weeks; "for five months she was kept in bed in a darkened room; it was "a year before she could walk unsupported, and two years before "she could sit up all day." It was now observed that her sense of smell was almost entirely destroyed; and consequently, that her taste was much blunted.

It was not until four years of age, that the poor child's bodily health seemed restored, and she was able to enter upon her apprenticeship of life and the world.

But what a situation was hers! The darkness and the silence of the tomb were around her: no mother's smile called forth her answering smile,—no father's voice taught her to imitate his sounds: to her, brothers and sisters were but forms of matter which resisted her touch, but which differed not from the furniture of the house, save in warmth and in the power of locomotion; and not even in these respects from the dog and the cat.

But the immortal spirit which had been implanted within her could not die, nor be maimed nor mutilated; and though most of its avenues of communication with the world were cut off, it began to manifest itself through the others. As soon as she could walk, she began to explore the room, and then the house. She became familiar with the form, density, weight, and heat, of every article she could lay her hands upon. She followed her mother, and felt of her hands and arms, as she was occupied about the house; and her disposition to imitate led her to repeat every thing herself. She even learned to sew a little, and to knit.

Her affections, too, began to expand, and seemed to be lavished upon the members of her family with peculiar force.

But the means of communication with her were very limited; she could only be told to go to a place by being pushed; or to come to one by a sign of drawing her. Patting her gently on the head signified approbation; on the back, disapprobation.

She showed every disposition to learn, and manifestly began to use a natural language of her own. She had a sign to express her knowledge of each member of the family; as drawing her fingers down each side of her face, to allude to the whiskers of one; twirling her hand around, in imitation of the motion of a spinning wheel, for another; and so on. But although she received all the aid that a kind mother could bestow, she soon began to give proof of the importance of language to the development of human character. Caressing and chiding will do for infants and dogs, but not for children; and by the time Laura was seven years old, the moral effects of her privation began to appear. There was nothing to control her will but the absolute power of another, and humanity revolts at this: she had already begun to disregard all but the sterner nature of her father; and it was evident, that

as the propensities should increase with her physical growth, so would the difficulty of restraining them increase.

At this time, I was so fortunate as to hear of the child, and immediately hastened to Hanover, to see her. I found her with a well-formed figure; a strongly-marked, nervous-sanguine temperament; a large and beautifully shaped head, and the whole system in healthy action.

Here seemed a rare opportunity of benefitting an individual, and of trying a plan for the education of a deaf and blind person, which I had formed on seeing Julia Brace, at Hartford.

The parents were easily induced to consent to her coming to Boston; and on the fourth of October, 1837, they brought her to the Institution.

For a while, she was much bewildered. After waiting about two weeks, until she became acquainted with her new locality, and somewhat familiar with the inmates, the attempt was made to give her a knowledge of arbitrary signs, by which she could interchange thoughts with others.

There was one of two ways to be adopted: either to go on and build up a language of signs on the basis of the natural language which she had already herself commenced; or to teach her the purely arbitrary language in common use: that is, to give her a sign for every individual thing, or to give her a knowledge of letters, by the combination of which she might express her idea of the existence, and the mode and condition of existence, of any thing. The former would have been easy, but very ineffectual; the latter seemed very difficult, but, if accomplished, very effectual: I determined, therefore, to try the latter.

The first experiments were made by taking articles in common use, such as knives, forks, spoons, keys, &c., and pasting upon them labels with their names printed in raised letters. These she felt of very carefully, and soon, of course, distinguished that the crooked lines *s p o o n*, differed as much from the crooked lines *k e y*, as the spoon differed from the key in form.

Then small detached labels, with the same words printed upon them, were put into her hands; and she soon observed that they were similar to the ones pasted on the articles. She showed her perception of this similarity by laying the label *k e y* upon the key, and the label *s p o o n* upon the spoon. She was here encouraged by the natural sign of approbation, patting on the head.

The same process was then repeated with all the articles which she could handle; and she very easily learned to place the proper labels upon them. It was evident, however, that the only intellectual exercise was that of imitation and memory. She recollected that the label *b o o k* was placed upon a book, and she repeated the process, first from imitation, next from memory, with no other motive than the love of approbation, and apparently without the intellectual perception of any relation between the things.

After a while, instead of labels, the individual letters were given to her on detached pieces of paper: they were arranged side by

side, so as to spell *book, key, &c.*; then they were mixed up in a heap, and a sign was made for her to arrange them so as to express the words *book, key, &c.*, and she did so.

Hitherto, the process had been mechanical, and the success about as great as teaching a very knowing dog, a variety of tricks. The poor child had sat in mute amazement, and patiently imitated every thing her teacher did; but now the truth began to flash upon her—her intellect began to work—she perceived that here was a way by which she could herself make up a sign of any thing that was in her own mind, and show it to another mind, and at once her countenance lighted up with a human expression: it was no longer a dog, or parrot,—it was an immortal spirit, eagerly seizing upon a new link of union with other spirits! I could almost fix upon the moment when this truth dawned upon her mind, and spread its light to her countenance. I saw that the great obstacle was overcome, and that henceforward nothing but patient and persevering, though plain and straightforward efforts were to be used.

The result, thus far, is quickly related, and easily conceived; but not so was the process: for many weeks of apparently unprofitable labor were passed, before it was effected.

When it was said above, that a sign was made, it was intended to say, that the action was performed by her teacher, she feeling of his hands, and then imitating the motion.

The next step was to procure a set of metal types, with the different letters of the alphabet cast upon their ends; also a board, in which were square holes, into which she could set the types, so that only the letters on their ends could be felt above the surface.

Then, on any article being handed to her, for instance, a pencil, or a watch, she would select the component letters, and arrange them on her board, and read them with apparent pleasure.

She was exercised for several weeks in this way, until her vocabulary became extensive; and then the important step was taken of teaching her how to represent the different letters by the position of her fingers, instead of the cumbrous apparatus of the board and types. She accomplished this speedily and easily, for her intellect had begun to work in aid of her teacher, and her progress was rapid.

This was the period, about three months after she had commenced, that the first report of her case was made, in which it is stated that "she has just learned the manual alphabet, as used by the deaf mutes, and it is a subject of delight and wonder to see how rapidly, correctly, and eagerly, she goes on with her labors. Her teacher gives her a new object,—for instance a pencil, first lets her examine it, and get an idea of its use, then teaches her how to spell it by making the signs for the letters with her own fingers: the child grasps his hand, and feels of his fingers, as the different letters are formed; she turns her head a little one side, like a person listening closely; her lips

“are apart; she seems scarcely to breathe; and her countenance, at first anxious, gradually changes to a smile, as she comprehends the lesson. She then holds up her tiny fingers, and spells the word in the manual alphabet; next, she takes her types and arranges her letters; and at last, to make sure that she is right, she takes the whole of the types composing the word, and places them upon or in contact with the pencil, or whatever the object may be.”

The whole of the succeeding year was passed in gratifying her eager inquiries for the names of every object which she could possibly handle; in exercising her in the use of the manual alphabet; in extending by every possible way her knowledge of the physical relations of things; and in taking proper care of her health.

At the end of the year a report of her case was made, from which the following is an extract:

“It has been ascertained, beyond the possibility of doubt, that she cannot see a ray of light, cannot hear the least sound, and never exercises her sense of smell, if she has any. Thus her mind dwells in darkness and stillness, as profound as that of a closed tomb at midnight. Of beautiful sights, and sweet sounds, and pleasant odors, she has no conception; nevertheless, she seems as happy and playful as a bird or a lamb; and the employment of her intellectual faculties, or acquirement of a new idea, gives her a vivid pleasure, which is plainly marked in her expressive features. She never seems to repine, but has all the buoyancy and gayety of childhood. She is fond of fun and frolic, and when playing with the rest of the children, her shrill laugh sounds loudest of the group.

“When left alone, she seems very happy if she has her knitting or sewing, and will busy herself for hours: if she has no occupation, she evidently amuses herself by imaginary dialogues, or by recalling past impressions; she counts with her fingers, or spells out names of things which she has recently learned, in the manual alphabet of the deaf mutes. In this lonely self-communion she seems to reason, reflect, and argue; if she spells a word wrong with the fingers of her right hand, she instantly strikes it with her left, as her teacher does, in sign of disapprobation: if right, then she pats herself upon the head, and looks pleased. She sometimes purposely spells a word wrong with the left hand, looks roguish for a moment and laughs, and then with the right hand strikes the left, as if to correct it.

“During the year, she has attained great dexterity in the use of the manual alphabet of the deaf mutes; and she spells out the words and sentences which she knows, so fast and so deftly, that only those accustomed to this language can follow with the eye the rapid motions of her fingers.

“But wonderful as is the rapidity with which she writes her thoughts upon the air, still more so is the ease and accuracy with which she reads the words thus written by another, grasping their hands in hers, and following every movement of their

“ fingers, as letter after letter conveys their meaning to her mind. “ It is in this way that she converses with her blind playmates; “ and nothing can more forcibly show the power of mind in forcing matter to its purpose, than a meeting between them. For, “ if great talent and skill are necessary for two pantomimes to “ paint their thoughts and feelings by the movements of the body “ and the expression of the countenance, how much greater the “ difficulty when darkness shrouds them both, and the one can “ hear no sound!

“ When Laura is walking through a passage way, with her “ hands spread before her, she knows instantly those whom she “ meets, and passes them with a sign of recognition; but if it be “ a girl of her own age, and especially if one of her favorites, “ there is instantly a bright smile of recognition—a twining “ of arms—a grasping of hands—and a swift telegraphing upon “ the tiny fingers, whose rapid evolutions convey the thoughts and “ feelings from the outposts of one mind to those of the other. “ There are questions and answers—exchanges of joy or sorrow “ —there are kisses and caresses—just as between little children with all their senses.”

During this year, and six months after she had left home, her mother came to visit her; and the scene of their meeting was an interesting one.

The mother stood some time, gazing with overflowing eyes upon her unfortunate child, who, all unconscious of her presence, was playing about the room. Presently Laura ran against her, and at once began feeling of her hands, examining her dress, and trying to find out if she knew her; but not succeeding in this, she turned away as from a stranger, and the poor woman could not conceal the pang she felt, at finding that her beloved child did not know her.

She then gave Laura a string of beads which she used to wear at home, which were recognized by the child at once, who, with much joy, put them around her neck, and sought me eagerly, to say she understood the string was from her home.

The mother now tried to caress her child, but poor Laura repelled her, preferring to be with her acquaintances.

Another article from home was now given her, and she began to look much interested; she examined the stranger more closely, and gave me to understand that she knew she came from Hanover; she even endured her caresses, but would leave her with indifference at the slightest signal. The distress of the mother was now painful to behold; for, although she had feared that she should not be recognised, the painful reality of being treated with cold indifference by a darling child, was too much for woman's nature to bear.

After a while, on the mother taking hold of her again, a vague idea seemed to flit across Laura's mind, that this could not be a stranger: she therefore very eagerly felt of her hands, while her countenance assumed an expression of intense interest; she be-

came very pale, and then suddenly red; hope seemed struggling with doubt and anxiety, and never were contending emotions more strongly depicted upon the human face. At this moment of painful uncertainty, the mother drew her close to her side, and kissed her fondly, when at once the truth flashed upon the child, and all mistrust and anxiety disappeared from her face, as with an expression of exceeding joy she eagerly nestled to the bosom of her parent, and yielded herself to her fond embraces.

After this, the beads were all unheeded; the playthings which were offered to her were utterly disregarded; her playmates, for whom but a moment before she gladly left the stranger, now vainly strove to pull her from her mother; and though she yielded her usual instantaneous obedience to my signal to follow me, it was evidently with painful reluctance. She clung close to me, as if bewildered and fearful; and when, after a moment, I took her to her mother, she sprang to her arms, and clung to her with eager joy.

I had watched the whole scene with intense interest, being desirous of learning from it all I could of the workings of her mind; but I now left them to indulge, unobserved, those delicious feelings, which those who have known a mother's love, may conceive, but which cannot be expressed.

The subsequent parting between Laura and her mother, showed alike the affection, the intelligence and the resolution of the child; and was thus noticed at the time:

"Laura accompanied her mother to the door, clinging close to her all the way, until they arrived at the threshold, where she paused and felt around, to ascertain who was near her. Perceiving the matron, of whom she is very fond, she grasped her with one hand, holding on convulsively to her mother with the other, and thus she stood for a moment; then she dropped her mother's hand—put her handkerchief to her eyes, and turning round, clung sobbing to the matron, while her mother departed, with emotions as deep as those of her child."

At the end of the year 1839, after she had been twenty-eight months under instruction, the following report was made of her case:

"The intellectual improvement of this interesting being, and the progress she has made in expressing her ideas, are truly gratifying.

"Having mastered the manual alphabet of the deaf mutes, and learned to spell readily the names of every thing within her reach, she was then taught words expressive of positive qualities, as hardness, softness; and she readily learned to express the quality, by connecting the adjectives *hard* or *soft* with the substantive; though she generally followed what one would suppose to be the natural order in the succession of ideas, by placing the substantive first.

"It was found too difficult, however, then to make her understand any general expression of quality, as hardness, softness,

“in the abstract. Indeed, this is a process of mind most difficult for any children, especially for deaf mutes.

“Next she was taught those expressions of relation to place, which she could understand. For instance, a ring was taken and placed *on* a box, then the words were spelt to her, and she repeated them from imitation. Then the ring was placed *on* a hat, and a sign given her to spell; she spelt, *ring on box*—but being checked, and the right words given, she immediately began to exercise her judgement, and, as usual, seemed intently thinking. Then the same was repeated with a bag, a desk, and a great many other things, until at last she learned that she must name the thing *on* which the article was.

“Then the same article was put *into* the box, and the words *ring in box*, given to her. This puzzled her for many minutes, and she made many mistakes: for instance, after she had learned to say correctly whether the ring was *on* or *in* a box, a drawer, a hat, a bucket, &c., if she were asked, where is house, or matron, she would say, *in box*. Cross-questioning, however, is seldom necessary to ascertain whether she really understands the force of the words she is learning: for when the true meaning dawns upon her mind, the light spreads over her countenance.

“In this case, the perception seemed instantaneous, and the natural sign by which she expressed it was peculiar and striking: she spelt *on*, then laid one hand on the other; then she spelt *in to*, and inclosed one hand *within* the other.

“She easily acquired a knowledge and use of active verbs, especially those expressive of *tangible action*; as to *walk*, to *run*, to *sew*, to *shake*.

“At first, of course, no distinction could be made of mood and tense; she used the words in a general sense, and according to the order of her *sense of ideas*. Thus, in asking some one to give her bread, she would first use the word expressive of the leading idea, and say, *Bread, give, Laura*. If she wanted water, she would say, *Water, drink, Laura*.

“Soon, however, she learned the use of the auxiliary verbs, of the difference of past, present, and future tense. For instance, here is an early sentence: *Keller is sick; when will Keller well*; the use of *be* she had not acquired.

“Having acquired the use of substantives, adjectives, verbs, prepositions, and conjunctions, it was thought time to make the experiment of trying to teach her to *write*, and to show her that she might communicate her ideas to persons not in contact with her.

“It was amusing to witness the mute amazement with which she submitted to the process, the docility with which she imitated every motion, and the perseverance with which she moved her pencil over and over again in the same track, until she could form the letter. But when at last the idea dawned upon her, that by this mysterious process she could make other people understand what she thought, her joy was boundless.

“Never did a child apply more eagerly and joyfully to any task than she did to this; and in a few months she could make every letter distinctly, and separate words from each other;” and she actually wrote, unaided, a legible letter to her mother, in which she expressed the idea of her being well, and of her expectation of going home in a few weeks. It was, indeed, a very rude and imperfect letter, couched in the language which a prattling infant would use; but still, it shadowed forth, and expressed to her mother the ideas that were passing in her own mind.

“She is familiar with the processes of addition and subtraction in small numbers. Subtraction of one number from another puzzled her for a time; but by help of objects she accomplished it. She can count and conceive objects to about one hundred in number; to express an indefinitely great number, or more than she can count, she says, *hundred*. If she thought a friend was to be absent many years, she would say, *will come hundred Sundays*, meaning weeks. She is pretty accurate in measuring time, and seems to have an intuitive tendency to do it. Unaided by the changes of night and day, by the light, or the sound of any timepiece, she nevertheless divides time pretty accurately.

“With the days of the week, and the week itself as a whole, she is perfectly familiar. For instance: if asked what day will it be in fifteen days more, she readily names the day of the week. The day she divides by the commencement and end of school, by the recesses, and by the arrival of meal-times.

“Those persons who hold that the capacity of perceiving and measuring the lapse of time is an innate and distinct faculty of the mind, may deem it an important fact, that Laura evidently can measure time so accurately, as to distinguish between a half and whole note of music.

“Seated at the pianoforte, she will strike the notes in a measure like the following, quite correctly.



“Now it will be perceived, that she must have clear perception of lapse of time, in order to strike the two eighths at the right instant; for in the first measure they occur at the second beat, in the second measure at the third beat.

“Her judgement of distances and of relations of place is very accurate. She will rise from her seat, go straight towards a door, put out her hand just at the right time, and grasp the handle with precision.”

These extracts from former reports bring down the history of her instruction to the commencement of the year 1840, when she had been two years and two months under instruction.

She had attained, indeed, about the same command of language as common children of three years old possess. Of course

her power of expression is by no means equal to her power of conception; for she has no words to express many of the perceptions and sensations which her mind doubtless experiences.

I shall now notice such of the phenomena that I have remarked in her case during the last year, as seem most striking and important.

I shall divide these into physical, intellectual, and moral.

Her health has been very good. She has not grown much in height, but her frame has filled out.

A perceptible change has taken place in the size and shape of her head; and although unfortunately the measurement taken two years ago has been mislaid, every one who has been well acquainted with her, notices a marked increase in the size of the forehead. She is now just eleven years old; and her height is four feet, four inches, and seven-tenths. Her head measures twenty inches and eight-tenths in circumference, in a line drawn around it, and passing over the prominences of the parietal and those of the frontal bones; above this line the head rises one inch and one-tenth, and is broad and full. The measurement is four inches from one orifice of the ear to the other; and from the occipital spine to the root of the nose, it is seven inches.

Nothing has occurred to indicate the slightest perception of light or sound, or any hope of it; and although some of those who are much with her, suppose that her smell is more acute than it was, even this seems very doubtful.

It is true that she sometimes applies things to her nose, but often it is merely in imitation of the blind children about her; and it is unaccompanied by that peculiar lighting up of the countenance, which is observable whenever she discovers any new quality in an object.

It was stated in the first report that she could perceive very pungent odours, such as that of cologne; but it seemed to be as much by the irritation they produced upon the nervous membrane of the *nares*, as by any impression upon the olfactory nerve.

It is clear that the sensation can not be pleasurable, nor even a source of information to her respecting physical qualities; for such is her eagerness to gain any information, that could smell serve her, she would exercise it incessantly.

Those who have seen Julia Brace, or any other deaf and blind person, could hardly fail to observe how quickly they apply every thing which they feel, to the nose; and how by this incessant exercise, the smell becomes almost incredibly acute. Now with Laura this is not the case; she seldom puts a new thing to her nose; and when she does, it is mechanically, as it were, and without any interest.

Her sense of touch has evidently improved in acuteness; for she now distinguishes more accurately the different undulations of the air, or the vibrations of the floor, than she did last year. She perceives very readily when a door is opened or shut, though she may be sitting at the opposite side of the room. She perceives also the tread of persons upon the floor.

Her mental perceptions, resulting from sensation, are much more rapid than they were, for she now perceives by the slightest touch, qualities and conditions of things, similar to those she had formerly to feel long and carefully for. So with persons, she recognises her acquaintances in an instant, by touching their hands or their dress; and there are probably fifty individuals, who, if they should stand in a row, and each hold out a hand to her, would be recognised by that alone.

The memory of these sensations is very vivid, and she will readily recognise a person whom she has once thus touched. Many cases of this kind have been noticed; such as a person shaking hands with her, and making a peculiar pressure with one finger, and repeating this on his second visit, after a lapse of many months, being instantly known by her. She has been known to recognise persons whom she had thus simply shaken hands with but once, after a lapse of six months.

This is not more wonderful indeed, than that one should be able to recall impressions made upon the mind through the organ of sight, as when we recognise a person of whom we had but one glimpse a year before; but it shows the exhaustless capacity of those organs of sense which the Creator has bestowed, as it were in reserve against accidents, and which we usually allow to lie unused and unvalued.

The progress which she has made in intellectual acquirements, can be fully appreciated by those only who have seen her frequently. The improvement however is made evident by her greater command of language; and by the conception which she now has of the force of parts of speech which last year she did not use in her simple sentences; for instance, of pronouns, which she has begun to use within six months. Last Spring, returning fatigued from her journey home, she complained of a pain in her side, and on being asked what caused it, she used these words, *Laura did go to see mother, ride did make Laura side ache, horse was wrong, did not run softly.* If she were now to express the same thing she would say, *I did go to see mother, ride did make my side ache, &c.* This will be seen by an extract from her teacher's diary of last month, "Dec. 18th, to-day Laura asked me "what is voice?" I told her as well as I could, that it was an impression made upon another when people talk with their mouth. She then said, "*I do not voice.*" I said, can you talk with your mouth? *Ans.* "No;" "why?" "*Because I am very deaf and dumb.*" "Can you see?" "*No, because I am blind, I did not talk with fingers when I came with my mother, Doctor did teach me on fork—what was on fork?*" I told her paper was fixed on forks, she then said, "*I did learn to read much with types, Doctor did teach me in nursery. Drussilla was very sick all over.*"

The words here given [and indeed in all cases] are precisely as she used them; for great care is taken to note them at the

time of utterance. It will be observed that she uses the pronoun, personal and possessive; and so ready is she to conceive the propriety of it, and the impropriety of her former method, that upon my recently saying, "Doctor will teach Laura," she eagerly shook my arm to correct me, and told me to say, "*I will teach you.*" She is delighted when she can catch any one in an error like this; and she shows her sense of the ludicrous, by laughter, and gratifies her innocent self-esteem by displaying her knowledge.

It will be observed that these words are all spelled correctly; and indeed her accuracy in this respect, is remarkable. She requires to have a word spelled to her only once, or twice at most, and she will seldom fail to spell it right ever afterwards.

I will give some sentences such as she was accustomed to use about the commencement of the past year, and contrast them with those of later date. Riding in the stage-coach with her teacher, over a rough road, she said, "*Laura will say to men horse will run softly—horse is wrong.*" Sitting at breakfast she asked "*who did make egg?*"—Ans. "Hen." "*With foot?*" Ans.—"No." "*Laura do love egg, hen will make more.*"

Here are some of her sentences of a more recent date, and subsequently to her learning the use of pronouns, the number of nouns, &c. Being surprised one day, that I had not examined her for some time, she stopped short in her lesson, and said to her teacher, "*Doctor is not glad that I can cypher good.*" Being asked why, she said, "*because he does not want me to show him sum,*" she was told I was busy, and had gone to the City. She said, "*horse will be much tired to go to Boston all days.*"

She easily learned the difference between the singular and the plural form, but was for some time inclined to apply the rule of adding *s*, universally. For instance, at her first lesson she had the words *arm-arms, hand-hands, &c.*; then being asked to form the plural of *box*, she said *boxs, &c.*, and for a long time she would form the plural by the general rule, as *lady, ladys, &c.*

One of the girls had the mumps. Laura learned the name of the disease; and soon after she had it herself, but she had the swelling only on one side; and some one saying, you have got the mumps, she replied quickly, "*no, no, I have mump.*"

She was a long time in learning words expressive of comparison; indeed her teacher quite despaired of making her understand the difference between good, better, and best, after having spent many days in the attempt. By perseverance, however, and by giving her an idea of comparative sizes, she was at last enabled to use comparisons pretty well. She seemed to attach to the word *large*, when connected with an object, a substantive meaning, and to consider it a specific name of the particular thing. The same difficulty, perhaps, occurs with common children, only we do not notice it: children merely observe, at first; comparison comes later; and perhaps few girls of six years old can be made to have a clear idea of the power and signification

of the word *or*, which, insignificant as it seems, has been a stumbling block to Laura up to this day.

With pronouns, she had very little difficulty. It was thought best, at first, to talk with her as one does with an infant; and she learned to reply in the same way. *Laura want water; give Laura water*; but she readily learned to substitute the pronoun, and now says *give me water—I want water*, &c. Indeed she will not allow persons to address her in the third person, but instantly corrects them, being proud to show her knowledge.

She learned the difference between present and past tense during the last year, but made use of the auxiliaries; during this year she has learned the method of inflecting the verb. In this process too her perfect simplicity rebukes the clumsy irregularities of our language: she learned the words, *jump jumped—walk walked*, &c., until she had an idea of the mode of forming the imperfect tense, but when she came to the word *see*, she insisted that it should be *seed*, in the imperfect: and after this, upon going down to dinner, she asked if it was *eat—cated*, but being told it was *ate*, she seemed to try to express the idea that this transposition of letters was not only wrong, but ludicrous, for she laughed heartily.

The eagerness with which she followed up these exercises was very delightful: for to witness the pupil teasing the teacher for more words, furnished a pleasing contrast to the too common scene where all the work is on one side, and where the coaxing, and scolding, and birchen appliances to boot, often fail to force an idea into the mind in the proper shape. But Laura is always ready for a lesson; and generally has prepared, beforehand, a number of questions to put to her teacher; for instance, when she was learning past tenses, she came one morning with fourteen verbs, of which she knew the present form, to ask for the imperfect.

The most recent exercises have been upon those words which require attention to one's own mental operations, such as *remember, forget, expect, hope*, &c.

Greater difficulties have been experienced in these than in her former lessons, but they have been so far surmounted that she uses many words of this kind, with a correct preception of their meaning.

The day after her first lesson on the words *I remember—and I forget*, this memorandum was made of her second lesson on the same words: Question—"What do you remember you did do last Sunday?" Answer—"I remember not to go to meeting," meaning that she did not go to meeting: Question—"What do you remember you did do on Monday?" Answer—"To walk in streets, on snow;" this was correct: Question—"What do you remember you did do in vacation?" Answer—"What is vacation?" This was a new word to her: she had been accustomed to say "*when is no school*," or, "*when girls go home*." The word being explained, she said "*I remember to go to Halifax*;" meaning that she did go to Halifax, which was true. What do you

remember you did in vacation before? Answer—"to play with *Olive, Maria, and Lydia*"—these were the girls who had been her companions.

Wishing to make her use the word *forget*, I pushed the questions back to periods which she could not recall. I said, "what did you do when you was a little baby?"—she replied, laughing, *I did cry*, and made the sign of tears running down her cheeks.

What did you *say*?—[no answer]; did you talk with fingers? "*No*," [very decidedly]; "did you talk with mouth?"—[a pause]—"what did you say with mouth?" "*I forget*." I then quickly let her know, that this was the proper word, and of the same force as, *I do not remember*. Thinking this to be a good opportunity of testing her recollection of her infancy, many questions were put to her, but all that could be learned satisfactorily was, that she could recollect lying on her back, and in her mother's arms, and having medicines poured down her throat—or in her own words, "*I remember mother to give me medicines*"—making the signs of lying down, and of pouring liquids down the throat.

It was not until after she had learned a few words of this kind, that it was possible to carry her mind backwards to her infancy; and to the best of my judgement, she has no recollection of any earlier period than the long and painful illness in which she lost her senses. She seems to have no recollection of any words of prattle, which she might have learned in the short respite which she enjoyed from bodily suffering.

Her idea of oral conversation, it seems to me, is, that people make signs with the mouth and lips, as she does with her fingers.

Thus far, her progress in the acquisition of language has been such as one would infer, *a priori*, from philosophical considerations; and the successive steps have been nearly such as Monboddo supposed were taken by savages in the formation of their language.

But it shows clearly how valuable language is, not only for the *expression* of thought, but for aiding mental development, and exercising the higher intellectual faculties.

When Laura first began to use words, she evidently had no idea of any other use, than to express the individual existence of things, as *book, spoon, &c.* The sense of touch had of course given her an idea of their existence, and of their individual characteristics; but one would suppose that specific differences would have been suggested to her also; that is, that in feeling of many books, spoons, &c., she would have reflected that some were large, some small, some heavy, some light, and been ready to use words expressive of the specific or generic character. But it would seem not to have been so, and her first use of the words *great, small, heavy, &c.*, was to express merely individual peculiarities; *great book* was to her the double name of a particular book; *heavy stone* was one particular stone; she did not consider these terms as expressive of *substantive* specific differences, or any differences of quality; the words *great* and *heavy* were not

considered abstractly, as the name of a general quality, but they were blended in her mind with the name of the objects in which they existed. At least, such seemed to me to be the case, and it was not until some time after, that the habit of abstraction enabled her to apply words of generic signification in their proper way.

This view is confirmed by the fact, that when she learned that persons had both individual and family names, she supposed that the same rule must apply to inanimate things, and asked earnestly what was the other name for chair, table, &c.

Several of the instances which have been quoted, will show her disposition to form her words by rule, and to admit of no exceptions; having learned to form the plurals by adding *s*, the imperfect by adding *ed*, &c., she would apply this to every new noun or verb: consequently the difficulty hitherto has been greater, and her progress slower, than it will be; for she has mastered the most common words, and these seem to be the ones that have been most broken up by the rough colloquial usage of unlettered people.

The notice of her intellectual progress has thus far related to her acquisition of language, and this, to her, was the principal occupation; other children learn language by mere imitation and without effort; she has to ask by a slow method, the name of every new thing; other children use words which they do not understand; but she wishes to know the force of every expression. Her knowledge of language, however, is no criterion of her knowledge of things; nor has she been taught mere words. She is like a child placed in a foreign country, where one or two persons only know her language, and of whom she is constantly asking the names of the objects around her.

The moral qualities of her nature have also developed themselves more clearly. She is remarkably correct in her deportment; and few children of her age evince so much sense of propriety in regard to appearance. Never, by any possibility, is she seen out of her room with her dress disordered; and if by chance any spot of dirt is pointed out to her on her person, or any little rent in her dress, she discovers a sense of shame, and hastens to remove, or repair it.

She is never discovered in an attitude or an action at which the most fastidious would revolt; but is remarkable for neatness, order, and propriety.

There is one fact which is hard to explain in any way; viz. the difference of her deportment to persons of different sex. This was observable when she was only seven years old. She is very affectionate; and when with her friends of her own sex, she is constantly clinging to them, and often kissing and caressing them; and when she meets with strange ladies, she very soon becomes familiar, examines very freely their dress, and readily allows them to caress her. But with those of the other sex it is entirely different, and she repels every approach to familiarity.

She is attached, indeed, to some, and is fond of being with them; but she will not sit upon their knee, for instance, or allow them to take her round the waist, or submit to those innocent familiarities which it is common to take with children of her age.

This circumstance will be variously explained by those who have formed theories on the subject; and the inference from it, of a natural feeling of delicacy, will be opposed by some with the fact of the want of delicacy in savages: It will be denied, too, by those who have arrived at that extreme of refinement, which seems to approach the primitive state; who choose that dress shall not be covering, even in promiscuous assemblies; and who there shrink not from the dizzying dance, in which

“Round all the confines of the yielded waist,
“The strangest hand may wander, undisplaced.”

But against the evidence unfavorable to its existence, which is to be drawn from customs, whether of savage life, or of the *haut-ton*, may be opposed that of this unsophisticated child of nature, *valeat quantum*.

The fact is merely noticed for the consideration of others; its opposite should have been as unhesitatingly announced, had it existed.

She seems to have, also, a remarkable degree of conscientiousness, for one of her age; she respects the rights of others, and will insist upon her own.

She is fond of acquiring property, and seems to have an idea of ownership of things which she has long since laid aside, and no longer uses. She has never been known to take any thing belonging to another; and never, but in one or two instances to tell a falsehood, and then only under strong temptation. Great care, indeed, has been taken, not to terrify her by punishment, or to make it so severe, as to tempt her to avoid it by duplicity, as children so often do.

When she has done wrong, her teacher lets her know that she is grieved, and the tender nature of the child is shown by the ready tears of contrition, and the earnest assurances of amendment, with which she strives to comfort those whom she has pained.

When she has done any thing wrong, and grieved her teacher, she does not strive to conceal it from her little companions, but communicates it to them, tells them “*it is wrong*,” and says, “*Doctor cannot love wrong girl*.”

When she has any nice thing given to her, she is particularly desirous that those who happen to be ill, or in any way afflicted, should share with her, although they may not be those whom she in other circumstances particularly loves; nay! even if it be one whom she dislikes! She loves to be employed in attending the sick, and is most assiduous in her simple attentions, and tender and endearing in her demeanor.

It has been remarked in former reports, that she can distinguish different degrees of intellect in others, and that she soon regarded almost with contempt, a new comer, when, after a few days, she discovered her weakness of mind. This unamiable part of her character has been more strongly developed during the past year.

She chooses for her friends and companions, those children who are intelligent, and can talk best with her; and she evidently dislikes to be with those who are deficient in intellect, unless, indeed, she can make them serve her purposes, which she is evidently inclined to do. She takes advantage of them, and makes them wait upon her, in a manner that she knows she could not exact of others; and in various ways she shows her Anglo Saxon blood.

She is fond of having other children noticed and caressed by the teachers, and those whom she respects; but this must not be carried too far, or she becomes jealous. She wants to have her share, which, if not the lion's, is the greater part; and if she does not get it, she says, "*My mother will love me.*"

Her tendency to imitation is so strong, that it leads her to actions which must be entirely incomprehensible to her, and which can give her no other pleasure than the gratification of an internal faculty. She has been known to sit for a half an hour, holding a book before her sightless eyes, and moving her lips, as she has observed seeing people do when reading.

She one day pretended that her doll was sick; and went through all the motions of tending it, and giving it medicine; she then put it carefully to bed, and placed a bottle of hot water to its feet, laughing all the time most heartily. When I came home, she insisted upon my going to see it, and feel its pulse; and when I told her to put a blister to its back, she seemed to enjoy it amazingly, and almost screamed with delight.

Her social feelings, and her affections, are very strong; and when she is sitting at work, or at her studies, by the side of one of her little friends, she will break off from her task every few moments, to hug and kiss her with an earnestness and warmth, which is touching to behold.

When left alone, she occupies and apparently amuses herself, and seems quite contented; and so strong seems to be the natural tendency of thought to put on the garb of language, that she often soliloquizes in the *finger language*, slow and tedious as it is. But it is only when alone, that she is quiet; for if she becomes sensible of the presence of any persons near her, she is restless until she can sit close beside them, hold their hand, and converse with them by signs.

She does not cry from vexation and disappointment, like other children, but only from grief. If she receives a blow by accident, or hurts herself, she laughs and jumps about, as if trying to drown the pain by muscular action. If the pain is severe, she does not go to her teachers or companions for sympathy, but on the contrary tries to get away by herself, and then seems to give

vent to a feeling of spite, by throwing herself about violently, and roughly handling whatever she gets hold of.

Twice, only, have tears been drawn from her by the severity of pain, and then she ran away from the room, as if ashamed of crying for an accidental injury. But the fountain of her tears is by no means dried up, as is seen when her companions are in pain, or her teacher is grieved.

In her intellectual character, it is pleasing to observe an insatiable thirst for knowledge, and a quick perception of the relations of things. In her moral character, it is beautiful to behold her continual gladness—her keen enjoyment of existence—her expansive love—her unhesitating confidence—her sympathy with suffering—her conscientiousness, truthfulness, and hopefulness.

No religious feeling, properly so called, has developed itself; nor is it yet time, perhaps, to look for it; but she has shown a disposition to respect those who have power and knowledge; and to love those who have goodness; and when her perceptive faculties shall have taken cognizance of the operations of nature, and she shall be accustomed to trace effects to their causes, then may her veneration be turned to Him who is almighty, her respect to Him who is omniscient, and her love to Him who is all goodness and love!

Until then, I shall not deem it wise, by premature effort, to incur the risk of giving her ideas of God which would be alike unworthy of His character, and fatal to her peace.

I should fear that she might personify Him in a way too common with children, who clothe Him with unworthy, and sometimes grotesque attributes, which their subsequently developed reason condemns, but strives in vain to correct.

I have thus far confined myself to relating the various phenomena* which this remarkable case presents. I have related the facts, and each one will make his own deductions. But as I am almost invariably questioned by intelligent visitors of the Institution, about my opinion of her moral nature, and by what theory I can account for such and such phenomena; and as many pious people have questioned me respecting her religious nature, I will here state my views.

There seems to have been in this child no innate ideas, or innate moral principles; that is in the sense in which Locke, Condillac, and others, consider those terms. But there are innate intellectual *dispositions*; and moreover, innate *moral dispositions*, not derived, as many metaphysicians suppose, from the exercise of intellectual faculties, but as independent in their existence, as the intellectual dispositions themselves.

I shall be easily understood, when I speak of innate *dispositions*, in contradistinction to innate ideas, by those who are at all con-

* I have purposely refrained from saying any thing at this time with regard to her ideas of death; and also of some other subjects, which I reserve until more accurate observations can be made.

versant with metaphysics; but as this case excites peculiar interest, even among children, I may be excused for explaining.

We have no innate ideas of color, of distance, &c. Were we blind, we never could conceive the idea of color, nor understand how light and shade could give knowledge of distance. But we might have the innate disposition, or internal adaptation, which enables us to perceive color, and to judge of distance; and were the organ of sight suddenly to be restored to healthy action, we should gradually understand the natural language, so to call it, of light; and soon be able to judge of distance, by reason of *our innate disposition or capacity*.

So much for an intellectual perception. As an example of a moral perception, it may be supposed, for instance, that we have no innate idea of God, but that we have an innate disposition, or adaptation, not only to recognise, but to adore Him; and when the idea of a God is presented, we embrace it, because we have that internal adaptation which enables us to do so.

If the idea of a God were innate, it would be universal and identical, and not the consequential effect of the exercise of causality; it would be impossible to present Him under different aspects. He would not be regarded as Jupiter, Jehovah, Brahma: we could not make different people clothe Him with different attributes, any more than we can make them consider two and two to make three, or five, or any thing but four.

But, on the other hand, if we had no *innate disposition*, to receive the idea of a God, then could we never have conceived one, any more than we can conceive of time without a beginning—then would the most incontrovertible evidence to man, of God's existence have been wanting, viz. the internal evidence of his own nature.

Now it does appear to me very evident, from the phenomena manifested in Laura's case, that she has innate moral dispositions and tendencies, which, though developed subsequently (in the order of time) to her intellectual faculties, are not dependent upon them, nor are they manifested with a force proportionate to that of her intellect.

According to Locke's theory, the moral qualities and faculties of this child should be limited in proportion to the limitation of her senses; for he derives moral principles from intellectual dispositions, which alone he considers to be innate. He thinks moral principles must be *proved*, and can be so only by an exercised intellect.

Now the *sensations* of Laura are very limited; acute as is her touch, and constant as is her exercise of it, how vastly does she fall behind others of her age in the amount of sensations which she experiences; how limited is the range of her thought! how infantile is she in the exercise of her intellect! But her moral qualities—her moral sense, are remarkably acute: few children are so affectionate, or so scrupulously conscientious; few are so sensible of their own rights, or regardful of the rights of others.

Can any one suppose, then, that without innate moral dispositions, such effects could have been produced solely by moral lessons? For even if such lessons could have been given to her, would they not have been seed sown upon barren ground? Her moral sense, and her conscientiousness, seem not at all dependent upon any intellectual perception. They are not perceived, indeed, nor understood—they are *felt*; and she may feel them even more strongly than most adults.

These observations will furnish an answer to another question, which is frequently put concerning Laura: Can she be taught the existence of God, her dependence upon, and her obligations to Him?

The answer may be inferred from what has gone before; that, if there exists in her mind (and who can doubt that there does) the innate capacity for the perception of this great truth, it can probably be developed, and become an object of intellectual perception, and of firm belief.

I trust, too, that she can be made to conceive of future existence, and to lean upon the hope of it, as an anchor to her soul in those hours, when sickness and approaching death shall arouse to fearful activity the instinctive love of life, which is possessed by her in common with all.

But to effect this—to furnish her with a guide through life, and a support in death, much is to be done, and much is to be avoided!

None but those who have seen her engaged in the task, and have witnessed the difficulty of teaching her the meaning of such words as *remember, hope, forget, expect*, will conceive the difficulties in her way; but they, too, have seen her unconquerable resolution, and her unquenchable thirst for knowledge; and they will not condemn as visionary such pleasing anticipations.

I hope that funds will be provided to enable me to procure some intellectual person, who will devote her whole time to Laura, and that I shall not be obliged to depend so much upon those who have other duties. Hitherto, the plan of her education has been most faithfully seconded by the teachers of the Institution, to whom great credit is due; especially to Miss Drew, whose unwearied patience, and ever-watchful kindness, are the more meritorious, because their value can never be conceived by their unfortunate object.

By her teachers, then, and by all concerned, the attempt to develop the whole nature of this interesting being will be continued with all the zeal which affection can inspire; it will be continued too, with a full reliance upon the innate powers of the human soul: and with an humble confidence that it will have the blessing of Him who hears even the young ravens when they cry.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

S. G. HOWE.

NOTE TO APPENDIX A.

THE number of persons who have been deprived of both sight and hearing, has been supposed to be very small. There had been but one case upon record, I believe, in England, before that of James Mitchell, mentioned by Dugald Stewart. There has been one noticed quite recently, in France ; and there is the well-known case of Julia Brace, at Hartford.

But I am inclined to think these melancholy cases are more frequent than has been supposed. I have seen a boy in Rhode Island, who has been deaf, dumb, and blind, since he was four years old : he is now fourteen. His parents, who are very poor and benighted people, resisted all efforts to have him brought to this Institution. I have seen him several times, and was pained to find, on my last visit, that he was indulged and pampered in his appetites ; and had contracted habits which lead directly to intemperance.

There is a girl in Vermont, of whose case I have all the particulars, and who will probably be brought here soon.

A correspondent in Ireland has recently informed me, that a very interesting case had been discovered in Belfast, of a little girl quite deaf and blind. Some intelligent persons had made arrangements to have her instructed in the manner that Laura has been ; but, at the last dates, the mother had absconded with her child, preferring to her real welfare, the gain which she made by showing her offspring as a monster.

A very melancholy case was recently brought to me for advice. It was that of a boy, of very prepossessing appearance, fourteen years old, who, two months before, was in the possession of all his senses, and remarkable only for precocious mental activity. He was considered an extraordinary boy, and his mental activity was doubtless the effect of morbid sensibility of the brain, which could probably have been cured by entire cessation from study.

Suddenly his sight began to fail ; and in a few weeks he became entirely blind. Hardly had his parents recovered from the stunning influence of this blow, before they remarked with alarm that his hearing began to be affected, and they brought him to this city for advice.

When I saw him, his hearing was very obtuse ; it was necessary to speak in his ears very loudly, to make him hear ; and addressing him in this way, seemed like calling to a departing spirit, which was rapidly fading away. His mind was not at all affected ; but it was getting closed up in the body, and as much beyond the reach of other minds, as though his body were in the act of being enclosed in mason work.

I recommended that immediate advantage should be taken of what hearing remained, to teach him the manual alphabet, because, afterwards, it would be a very slow process. This was two months ago, and I have not since heard of him.

APPENDIX B.

*List of Articles manufactured in the Work Department of the
Institution, from June, 1840 to January, 1841.*

New Mattresses,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	246
Old Mattresses made over,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	338
Cushions,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	58
Pillows,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	144
Brushes,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	795
Brooms,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	598
Chair Bottoms,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
Floor Mats,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	297

Fancy Articles.

Scarfs,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29
Watch Guards,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	77
Woollen Bags,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	65
Purses,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
Lamp Mats,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
Pitchers,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17
Worsted Carpets,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9

APPENDIX C.

List of Books published at this Institution.

The New Testament, - - - -	2 vols. and 4 vols.
Parts of the Old Testament, - - - -	2 “
Lardner's Universal History, - - - -	3 “
Selections from old English Authors, - - - -	1 “
“ modern “ “ - - - -	1 “
Howe's Geography for the Blind, - - - -	1 “
“ General Atlas “ “ - - - -	1 “
“ Atlas of the United States, - - - -	1 “
“ Blind Child's First Book, - - - -	1 “
“ “ “ Second Book, - - - -	1 “
The Dairyman's Daughter, - - - -	1 “
The Harvey Boys, - - - -	1 “
Blind Child's Spelling Book, - - - -	1 “
“ “ English Grammar, - - - -	1 “
The Pilgrim's Progress, - - - -	1 “
Baxter's Call, - - - -	1 “
Sixpenny Glass of Wine, - - - -	1 “
Life of Melancthon, - - - -	1 “
Book of Sacred Hymns, - - - -	1 “
Viri Romæ, - - - -	1 “
Peirce's Geometry, with Diagrams, - - - -	1 “
Book of Diagrams illustrative of Natural Philosophy, - - - -	1 “
Political Class Book, - - - -	1 “
Blind Child's Manual, - - - -	1 “

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List of Books published at Glasgow.

Child's First Lesson Book, - - - -	1 vol.
“ Second “ “ - - - -	1 “
Church of England Catechism, - - - -	1 “
Church of Scotland “ - - - -	1 “
Liturgy, - - - -	1 “
History of the Bible, - - - -	1 “
Selections from Authors, - - - -	1 “
English Grammar, - - - -	1 “
Remarks on the Bible, - - - -	1 “
Fables, - - - -	1 “
Lessons on Prayer, - - - -	1 “
“ “ Natural Religion, - - - -	1 “

Musical Catechism,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	vol.
The Bible,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	"
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List of Books published in Philadelphia.

Ruth and Esther,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	vol.
Book of Proverbs,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	"
Guide to Spelling,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	"
Select Library,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	"
Student's Magazine,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	"
French Verbs,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	"
<i>Die Oster eier,</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	"
<i>Answahl,</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	"
Grammar,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	"
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								14	
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Total, 72 vols.

The Gospel of St. Mark, and some small works, have been published by Mr. Gall, of Edinburgh.

On the Continent, the Institutions of Paris and of Vienna, have published several volumes in French and German.

APPENDIX D.

Abstract of Treasurer's Account.

1840, Jan'y 1, to Jan'y 1, 1841.	Amount paid bills for alterations and repairs of Mt. Washington House, incurred last year, Household expenses for board, washing, domest- ics, fuel, &c., for thirteen months, - Salaries of Director, Assistant, and Teachers, School apparatus, books, &c. - Printing Department, - Musical instruments, repairs of do. and Music, Garden seeds, tools, &c. - Insurance, - Medicines, - Advertising, - Clothing for indigent pupils, - Stationery, - Coach hire to funeral, and omnibus tickets, Post Office account, - Sundry repairs, - Cash on hand, Cash on deposit at Boston Bank, - Nine shares New England Bank stock -	4748 14 7255 78 3368 77 1134 89 1134 61 151 94 15 83 160 00 61 22 54 59 174 70 30 82 43 70 25 71 41 03 17,436 73 2340 03 1729 79 900 00 22,406 55	1840, Jan'y 1, Dec. 31.	By balance of cash from last account, - " amount of deposit in Boston Bank, - " nine shares in New England Bank stock, " amount rec'd during the year from the State of Massachusetts, - " do. do. from other States, for pupils, - " do. do. do. from sale of books, - " do. do. do. from pay pupils, - " do. do. do. from legacy of B. Winslow, " donation of J. A. Lowell, - " an't rec'd donations to Printing Fund, viz : Peter C. Brooks, - 300 Mrs. Joy, - 50 A Friend, - 100 G. T. Baker, of N. Bedford, 100 Mr. Hancock, - 10 Mr. Pickard, of Havana, - 10 Pupils of Mr. Clary, - 9 A Friend, - 50 " " - 16 Mrs. Cran, - 10 An't rec'd from Concerts, and tuning Pianos, " " from shop, - " " from dividends of N. E. Bank stock, " " from interest on deposit in B. Bank,	701 14 7500 00 900 00 7713 26 2492 15 427 49 1026 42 250 00 100 00 655 00 207 03 250 27 54 00 129 79 22,406 55
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